I
STUDIES
Historical Information
Umatilla

December 15, 1938

"Having traced briefly the famous Indian scare of 1878 in Union County, we turn now to the war in those parts of eastern Oregon where it was more than a scare. While the story of the actual hostilities has for its scene places more or less remote from the county with which our volume is primarily concerned, yet so important was the Bannock and Piute war to the people of eastern Oregon generally that it is thought the interest of our narrative will be greatly enhanced if we reproduce in this connection the substance of an account of the war prepared by Colonel William Parsons, of Pendleton, for one of the publishers' former works. That writer states that the invasion in the summer of 1878 by the Indian horde under the leader ship of chiefs Buffalo Horn and Egan was the most exciting event in the history of eastern Oregon since its settlement by the whites. He thinks the causes underlying this invasion have been strangely overlooked and that nothing could be further from the fact than Gilbert's surmise when he says: "Buffalo Horn was a celebrated warrior, who had the year before aided the government against Chief Joseph and his hostile band of Nez Perces. His reward for such service was not in keeping with his estimate of its value and importance. He saw Chief Joseph honored and made the recipient of presents and flattering attentions, while the great Buffalo Horn was practically ignored. His philosophical mind at once led him to the conclusion that more favors could be wrung from the government by hostility than in fighting its battles."

With the exception of the Utes, the Bannocks are the meanest, most treacherous, most savage and most bloodthirsty of all the Indians west of the Mississippi river. From time immemorial they have been the hereditary enemies of the Oregon and Idaho Indians, including the Cayuses, Umatillas, Walla Wallas and Nez Perces, and more than once they crossed the Blue mountains and inflicted bitter injuries upon the Cayuses and their allies. Therefore, when Chief Joseph and his band of non-treaty Nez Perces took up arms in 1877, rather than surrender the Wallowa country to the whites, and began their famous retreat through the Lolo pass and the Yellowstone park to the British possessions, the Bannocks, under command of Captain Samuel G. Fisher, a white man, furnished nearly a hundred warriors to harrass the fleeing Nez Perces. They saw the whole of that remarkable campaign; they saw Joseph, with less than four hundred warriors, and encumbered with one thousand women and whildren, carry on a running fight for one thousand, four hundred miles, defeating General Howard again and again, recapturing his camp at Big Hole Basin from General Gibbon and pursuing the latter so fiereely that nothing but his reserve artillery saved his force from annihilation, anf finally surrendering with the honors of war to General Miles at Bear Paw mountain, near the British line. He saw Joseph captured, but not disgraced, and he became jealous of the Nez Perce Chieftains' military fame; he also realized, when it was too late, that he had made a serious mistake in

joining forces to that of the whites in the pursuit and capture of the brave Nez Perces, and that in gratifying a tribal grudge he had dealt a deadly blow at the Indian race; he saw the whites crowding into Montana and Idaho, his people ordered within the confines of the Fort Hall reservation, and it finally dawned upon his benighted mind that the same chains which had been fastened to the ankles of Joseph were already forged for his, and were about to be reiveted on them. Buffalo Horn was something of a statesman, but no general; Joseph was, in the opinion of General Miles, the ablest strategist and general of the Indian race, from the time of King Phillip to the present. Buffalo Horn came to the conclusion that if he could unite all the Indians west of the Missouri into a confederacy the whites could be wiped out. Thereupon he visited the various bands of the Utes, the Shoshones, the Umatillas, Cayuses and Walla Wallas, and sent runners to the Columbias, Spokanes, Chief Moses and other northern Indians, requesting them to unite with him in a final effort to drive the whites out of the Inland Empire. His overtures were received with favor, and early in June, 1878 he began his march from the neighborhood of Fort Hall, Idaho. The Bannocks, with whom were many Shoshones, and all comprised under the general name of "Snake" Indians, were joined by a large band of Piutes, under the lead of Egan, their great war chief. They then numbered about five hundred warriors, women and children swelling the force to about two thousand. The plan was to move west and north from Pocatello, past Boise till a junction was formed with the Umatillas, Cayuses, Walla Wallas and Columbias, on the Umatilla reservation, then, devastating the country to move north uniting with the Spokanes and other Indians in northern Washington, there to make a stand, but, if hard pressed, to retire across the line within the limits of British Columbia. The plan was well conceived, and could have been executed had the Indians been possessed of a general with the ability of Joseph. They started from Fort Hall, according to program, swinging down across the prairies, lava beds and timber, making a circuit of a hundred miles radius about Boise as a center, where there was a military post and considerable white population; but they could not desist from murdering every white man or Chinaman found prospecting or mining, with the result that the whole country was alarmed and the whites started in pursuit. Colonel Orlando Robbins, with a party of scouts and a portion of the First Cavalry, under Colonel Bernard, overtook the Indians at Silver Creek, Idaho, and made such a fierce assault that the Indians were badly demoralized.

In this engagement Chief Egan and Colonel Robbins had a personal duel, in which Egan was shot twice, his left arm being crippled and his well known buckskin warhorse was captured. Egan was dragged from the field by his young warriors, the severe wound received made his subsequent capture on the Umatilla reservation comparitively easy. Egan overlooked another thing in this campaign, --- the telegraph wire. As soon as the news of his outbreak was received at Boise the fact was telegraphed to San Francisco, Portland and other points and all the troops available were started at once to pursue and intercept the hostiles.

The first definite information received at Pendleton of the approach of the Indians was brought in by Narcisse A. Cornoyer on the secon of July, who reported that while out on the John Day river with a hunting party he had struck the hostiles. The consternation can hardly be described. In wagons, on horseback and on foot the settlers hastened to the nearest towns for protection. Pendleton, Umatilla, Wallula, Weston, Milton and Walla Walla were crowded with refugees. Homes were abandoned so hastily that neither provisions nor extra clothing were provided. All settlements within reach of a warning voice were deserted in a day. Cattle and sheep men in the mountains were in a precarious situation, and many were killed before they could reach places of safety. Major Cornoyer the Indian agent, gathered in all the Indians possible, including the Columbia river and Warm Spring Indians, amounting to about two thousand, the loyalty of many of whom was seriously doubted.

Butnwhile most of the settlers escaped to the towns, it must not be forgotten that the towns, themselves were scarcely able to make any defense. Pendleton had not more than one hundred and fifty inhabitants, but with the refugees it had perhaps three hundred, of whom perhaps seventy-five were capable of bearing arms. Heppner, Wallula, Weston and Milton were mere hamlets. They were widely separated -- too far for support -- and fifteen hundred savage warriors were supposed to be about to fall upon them. Pendleton was to receive the first assault. That the result would be the complete destruction of Pendleton and its outlying settlements was believed by many, while the most sanguine felt but little confidence. In one of the several skirmishes before the Indians reached the Blue mountains, Buffalo Horn, the Bannock leader, had been killed and the command of the allied forces of Snakes and Piutes devolved upon Egan, who was totally unfit for so heavy a responsibility, and was also incapacitated in a measure from wounds. His army arrived in and had possession of Camas prairie on July 4th, and if he had marched at once upon Pendleton he would have met no effective resistance, could have followed the Umatilla down to the Columbia and in spite of the two or three armed steamboats patrolling the river made a successful crossing. That accomplished, he could have gathered up the northern Indians and with augmented forces could fight or retreat across the British line as seemed most advisable; but he hesitated and delay was fatal to his enterprise. Compare Egan's imbecility with Chief Joseph's masterly strategy when he emerged from the Lolo trail near Missoula, Montana, the previous year, and found himself confronted with a strong force, behind and impregnable fortification of logs, while General Howard was thundering in the rear. Joseph called for a parley with the whites in his front and tried to get permission to pass, under promise to commit no depredations. Failing to do that, he notified the enemy that he would force a passage the next morning, and then he opened fire on the disputed passage with a thin line of skirmishers, and while the whites were thus occupied he led the whole party of nearly fifteen hundred people, mostly noncombatants, by a devious route through the timber and almost impassible canyons to the rear of the fort, effecting his escape without the loss of a man.

It was fortunate for the people of eastern Oregon that they did not have a man of Joseph's ability as a commanding officer to cope with on that mementous fourth day of July, 1878, but only a blunderer like Egan. Instead of striking a decisive blow and falling upon Pendleton before the troops from Walla Walla, and the volunteers from Weston, Milton and other points, could concentrate, he frittered away the time killing a few straggling sheep herders and skirmishing with Captain Wilson's handful of thirty men, which had met the Indians near Alba, and finding that the enemy was in force had retreated to Pendleton with considerable alacrity. So small was the force of the whites at Pendleton and so badly was it provided with arms and competent officers, to say nothing of its utter demoralization through rumors and reports of the overwhelming strength of the Indians, that men who were present affirm that if one hundred Indians had made a sharp attack, either on the 4th, 5th or 6th of July, the town would have fallen; If Egan's whole force of five hundred warriors had made the assault on either of those days no effective resistance could have been made, and the valley of the Umatilla from the Blue Mountains to the Columbia would have been swept clear of the whites. The Umatilla reservation Indians would have been forced to Unite with the hostiles, the Columbias and Washington Indians would have followed the example, and Buffalo Horn's confederacy would have been consummated to the enormous damage of white interests throughout the whole Inland Empire. Fortunately, it was Egan, not Joseph, who led the hostiles.

Pendleton consisted of about thirty or forty houses, mostly one-story shacks, scattered along Court and Main streets from the Golden Rule hotel to the Pendleton Savisngs Bank building. Besides the courthouse, there was in the town a three-story frame mill, where the main building of Byers' splendid frame mill now stands, but it was away out of the then town. The houses were in a sort of quadrangle, by no means compact. The first defense erected by the panic stricken inhabitants of Pendleton was a row of wagons stretched across Main Steet from the Savings Bank building to where the Odd Fellows' building now stands. The women and children were hustled into Byers' mill, and a number of the men went to guard them. Frank Vincent was made captain of the company organized for the defense of the town.

At Umatilla City similar precaustions were taken. J. H. Kunzie was appointed assistant adjutant general by Governor Stephen F. Chadwich and made his headquarters there. That point was selected because it had the nearest telegraph office, and because supplies for troops and volunteers landed there. Volunteers were organized and armed by Kunzie, and the town was closely guarded. It had a population of about one hundred and fifty at that time. The stone warehouse of J. R. Koster & Co. was fitted up for a fort in which a final stand could be made in case of an attack. Like preparations were made at Heppner, Weston, Milton and other places which were supposed to be in danger.

As soon as Captain Wilson's company had straggled in from Camas prairie with the information that the hostiles were in force in that region, and that some of their number and some sheep-herders had been killed, another company was organized by Sheriff J. L. Sperry, which started July 5th for the front, with a company from Weston under Dr. W. W. Oglesby and another under M. Kirk. At Pilot Rock they received recruits and were then consolidated into a single company.

The next morning they marched from Pilot Rock for Camas Prairie, but stopped at Willow Springs for dinner. Willow Springs consisted of a house, a shed and a sheep corral. While at their dinner the volunteers were attacked in force by the Indians, who drove in the pickets so rapidly that it was a close race between the pursuers and the pursued as to which should first announce the assault. At the first alarm thirteen of the volunteers sprang onto their horses and struck out for Pendleton. The others made a virtue of necessity, tied their horses in the sheep corral and took refuge in the shed. The position was absolutely indefensible, being commanded by the surrounding hills and rocks. It had one advantage--there was water--but the water was not exactly available so long as the spring was outside the shed and commanded by the rifles of the Indians. The remnant of the company made a stout resistance all the afternoon, but at last began to suffer severely for water. One of the men refused to stand it, and taking a pail left the shed, against the earnest protestations of his comrades. Strange to say he walked through the zone of Indian fire,filled his pail and returned unscathed to his companions. The shed was riddled with bullets, and several casualties resulted. William Lamar, a school teacher, who was engaged to bemarried to a daughter of Dr. W. C. McKay, was killed, and S. I. Lansdon, A. Crisfield, S. Rothschild, afterward a prominent merchant of Pendleton, G. W. Titswerth, C. R. Henderson, Frank Hannah, Jacob Frazer, J. W. Salisbury and H. H. Howell were wounded, Salisbury and Hannah seven times.

Realizing that they were in a trap, the volunteers decided to abandon their position during the night and try to escape to Pendleton. Loading their wounded into a wagon (it was a curious thing that they all were shot in the leg) they started for Pendleton, the men being instructed to fall prostrate the instant a gun was fired. They had gone but a few hundred yards when the flash of a gun caused them to throw themselves prostrate upon the ground just in time to escape a destructive volley from the hostiles. Harrison Hale, too slow in falling, was shot dead. The rest of them returned the fire and the Indians gave way after discharging a few scattering shots. The retreat began at midgnight and before daylight the fugitives were attacked four times.

The return of this shattered company added to the demoralization of the defenders of Pendleton, and they were in very bad shape for a fight had the Indians followed up their advantage. Luckily the defeat of Sperry's company was covered by the arrival from Walla Walla of Major Throckmorton's regulars on the evening of the 6th, and the next day other troops arrived from Lapwai, making Throckmorton's force one hundred and fifty men. Upon the arrival at Pendleton of the thirteen men who had fled from Willow

Springs at the beginning of the action, Throckmorton instantly started to the relief of the party under Sheriff Sperry, and they met the retreating volunteers, soon after daylight, about four miles north of Pilot Rock. They escorted them back to Pendleton, where that remnant of an unfortunate company all arrived in safety.

And now the real defense of Pendleton began. A line of rifle pits was constructed from Foster's mill down to the mouth of Tutawilla, and manned by the regulars, and all the soldiers were fully supplied with ammunition. Captain Vincent's company of colunteers had general charge of the northern defenses of the town, but even then the line was not well maintained. The women and children were concentrated in Byers' mill, but there were no outposts to protect it, and the line along the Umatilla river to the north was without any adequate defense. At this stage of affairs James H. Turner, a lawyer, suggested the idea that the noncombatants in the mill were at the mercy of the Indians if the latter should attempt to fire that building. Thereupon Lot Livermore, Turner and James Drake, who had been in the Civil war, organized a company of twelve men, who, under Drake as captain, took possession of a fence east of Byers' mill, determined to hold it. The line along the river north of Court street was held by captain William Martin and a dozen other volunteers, so that no Indians could cross the river from the north. In this shape Pendleton was defended until July 7th, when General Howard and Major Throckmorton formed ajunction of their forces at Pilot Rock, and proceeded to make an attack in force on the Indians who were reported to be encamped at the head of Butter and Birch creeks. The situation in Pendleton during these fateful days was terrifying, and yet very amusing to one who looks back upon the excitement in the light of subsequent events.

Sunday, July 7th, Howard's forces, coming from the east, united with Throckmorton's regulars at Pilot Rock, and the nexy morning assailed the Indian camp at the head of Butter and Birch creeks. The forces thus combined were much more than a match for the Indians and Egan's chances of victory were gone. According to Gilbert.

"The command moved in two columns, two companies of artillery, one of infantry and a few volunteers under Throckmorton, seven companies of cavalry and twenty of Robbins' scouts, under Captain Bernard, accompanied by Howard in person. The Indians were encountered and driven with considerable loss from their stron gpositions, and finally fled in the direction of Grande Ronde valley.

Meanwhile, events were happening along the Columbia, Governor Perry hastened to Walla Walla on the 7th and raised a company of forty volunteers under Campain W. C. Painter, that proceeded to Wallula and embarked the next morning on the steamer Spokane under command of Major Kress.

Captain Wilkinson had the Northwest with twelve soldiers and twenty volunteers. These boats, armed with howitzers and Gatling guns, patrolled the river. This was the day that Howard drove the Indians back into the mountains, thus heading them off if they had any designs of crossing the river.

There were several hundred Indians that had never lived on the reservation and they were considered non-treaty Indians. They belonged chiefly to the Umatilla and Walla Walla tribes, lived in the vicinity of Wallula and were known as the Columbia River Indians. When Major Cornoyer gathered in the scattered bands, many of these refused to go and were looked upon as sympathizing with the hostiles and were supposed to have joined them. The morning of the day Howard had his fight on Butter and Birch creeks, a number of these attempted to cross the river with a quantity of stock. They were intercepted at three points by the Spokanes, and being fired upon, several Indians and a few horses were wounded and killed. All canoes from Celilo to Wallula were destroyed. Captain Wilkinson on the Northwest fired into a small party in the act of crossing a few miles above Umatilla. Two braves and a squaw were killed.

The death of State Senator C. L. Jewell was ascribed to Columbias by many. He had a large band of sheep in Camas prairie, and went there with Morrisey to look after them. They encountered a number of Indians but succeeded in eluding them and reaching the herders' cabin in safety. Leavin Morrisey there, he returned to Pendleton to secure arms for his men, who had decided to remain and defend themselves. The moring of the 5th he left Pendleton with several needle guns, contrary to the advice of many friends. He was expected at the hut that night but did not come.

The 8th Morrisey started to see if he could be found. Near Nelson's he met Captain Frank Maddock with a company of volunteers from Heppner, who informed him that two men had been killed there. A search revealed the bodies of Nelson and N. Scully. Morrisey went around Nelson's house, when he saw a piece of shake, sticking up in the road, upon which was written the information the Jewell was lying wounded in the brush. Morrisey called out, "Charley?" He received a faint response, and the injured man was found with a severe wound in his left side and his left arm broken.

When Jewell had approaced Nelson's place on the night of the 5th he had been fired upon and fell from his horse; but, while the Indians were killing those at the house, he had crawled into the bushes. In the morning he worked his way out into the road, wrote his notice on the shake and crawled back again. For three days he had lain there without food and unable to help himself, when he was found by Morrisey. He was conveyed to Pendleton and carefully nursed, but died the next Friday.

Meanwhile all was confusion at Pendleton and the agency. The citizens were suspicious of the reservation Indians, fearing they intended to unite with the hostiles. Consequently volunteers would not go the agency to defend it. Forty families of Columbias slipped out and went into the enemies' camp, and a few young Umatillas started off without permission, probably with a similar intention.

Two of these saw George Coggan, Fred Foster and Al Bunker coming down from Cayuse station on a course that took them in dangerous proximity to the hostiles. They rode toward the men with the intention of warning them, so they said afterward, and at the same time a third Indian road up from another direction. The men had seen some deserted wagons a few miles back.

where Olney, J. P. McCoy, Charles McLaughlin, Thomas Smith and James Myers had been killed. They had also passed a band of Columbias on their way to the hostile camp.

When they saw the Indians dashing toward them from different directions they supposed them to be the ones they had passed, and concluding their time had come, began firing at them. The Umatillas suddently changed their pacific intentions and commended shooting. Coogan was killed and Bunker wounded. Foster, who had every reason to believe that he was assailed by at least a score of savages, took the wounded man upon his horse and carried him two miles, when Bunker could go no farther. Foster was then compelled to leave him and hastened to Pendleton, where his arrival created a panic. Besides killing the teamsters, the Indians burned Cayuse station that day.

At this time news was received that Colonel Miles had been informed of Egan's movements, and had determined to take the responsibility of marching to the agency for its protection. To the exertions of Major Cornoyer and those accompanying him that night is due the fact that Colonel Miles arrived in time to defend the agency and avert the evils that would have followed its capture, including the murder of many people and a possible union of reservation Indians with the hostiles.

The troops, upon reaching their destination, proceeded at once to eat breakfast, but before they were through, the Snakes, Bannocks and Piutes, four hundred strong, were seen riding down from their camp. A line was quickly formed across the flat, and up the hill, and before the soldiers were all in position the Indians began to fire upon them. Nearly all day a battle was maintained with the soldiers lying in holes they had scooped in the ground to protect themselves.

Finally Miles decided to charge his assailants, although he had but one company of cavalry and would not be able to pursue them. The Cayuses requested permission to join the fight, and were allowed to do so on condition that they would keep with the soldiers and not get in advance of them. The command to charge was given, and the soldiers sprang from their riflepits and rushed upon the enemy, vieing with their Cayuse allies in the onslaught. The hostiles, fleeing to the mountains returned no more, and that night found them eighteen miles from the agency, after having finished the destruction of Cayuse station by burning the barn, and the Soldiers returned and went into camp. There were no casualties on the side of the troops and the volunteers.

Before the fight Umapine started out to do a little work on his own account. His father had been killed years before by Egan, who was in command of the hostiles, and he wanted revenge. When the battle was over he told Egan the Cayuses would join him, and pursuaded that chief to accompany him the next night to a point twelve miles from the agency to meet the Cayuse chiefs and arrange matters. He then sent word to Major Cornoyer to have forty soldiers stationed at the appointed place to capture or kill Egan when he appeared.

Colonel Miles held the same opinion of Umapine's loyalty that the citizens did and refused to send soldiers on such an errand. The Cayuses expressed

their disappointment to the agent, and complained of these suspicions. He told them the best way to convince the whites of their loyalty was go out themselves and capture Egan."

Whirlwind, chief of the Cayuses, acted on this suggestion, and picking out a party of about forty men repaired to the rendevous, which was between Meacham and Cayuse station. Umapine and Five Crows visited Egan at his camp and asked him to accompany them to a conference with the Umatilla chiefs, near Cayuse station. Egan fell into the trap, and went with them. All were on horseback. When they arrived near the rendevous on Little McKay creek Egan began to grow suspicious, sprang off his horse and closed with Five Crows, who was leading his horse. A desperate struggle ensued, but as Egan was crippled in one arm, as a result of the fight with Colonel Robbins a few days previous, he soon fell, shot through the head by Five Crows, Five Crows scalped Egan and as two of his sub-chiefs started to ride off the Cayuses shot them also. The firing brought a number of Piute and Bannock warriors and women to the scene, and a battle lasting an hour followed. The Cayuses were supported by the Umatillas, who were in ambush, and the Piutes, Bannocks and Snakes rallied to the support of Egan. When the battle was over the Cayuses with nine scalps and eighteen women and children prisoners returned in triumph to the agency. The hostiles retired toward Meacham.

A triumphal procession of all Indians on the reservation was formed and passed in review before the troops that were drawn up in line by General Wheaton, that officer having arrived from Walla Walla and taken command. Yatinecwits, a sub-chief of the Cayuses, bearing the scalp of Egan on a pole, arrived in front of the commanding officer, and pointing to his bloody trophy said: "Egan, Egan, we give you." "No, no, keep it, you brave man! exclaimed the disgusted officer.

Defeat on the reservation, the death of their leader, the return of the cavalry and the knowledge that the Columbia river could not be croose, so disheartened the hostiles that they began to break up and return to their own country. Chief Homeli with eighty picked warriors of the Cayuses, Umatillas and Walla Wallas, joined the troops in pursuit and kept the hostiles constantly on the move. Homeli reached their fron the 17th on Camas creek, and when the retreating bands came along charged into their midst, killing thirty of them without losing a man. He also captured twenty-seven women and children and a number of horses.

After their disastrous defeat on the Umatilla reservation and their retreat into the Blue Mountains the hostiles, being without leaders, broke up into small parties and scattered in every direction, except north. Howard, with ten small columns, pursued them energetically, overtook them and finally cornered them in Harney county, foreed their surrender and marched them across to Yakima, where they were placed under charge of Father Wilbur, supported by a stron garrison of troops from Fort Simcoe.

The effect of the war upon eastern Oregon generally was very bad. Farmers left their homes at a moment's notice and were gone in some instances for weeks. Stock broke into their fields and damaged the crops. Many of them had their houses and barns burned and their stock destroyed or driven away. Large bands of sheep and cattle were dispersed in the mountains,

THE PILOT ROCK EMIGRANT ROAD

The crossing of the Blue Mountains of Eastern Oregon was one of the most difficult parts of the journey over the Old Oregon Trail in the early days. The people of the first great migration of 1843 dreaded this part of the trip more than the burning wastes of the Snake River desert, more than the boat trip down the turbulent Columbia, more than attack by hostile savages for they were prepared and trained to repel such attacks. When this great caravan of over 900 people finally accomplished the crossing from the Grande Ronde Valley to the Umatilla River in five days, October 2 to 6 inclusive they were thankful indeed, and rejoiced that the worst of the trip was behind them.

It will be recalled that Marcus Whitman left the emigrants when they arrived in the Grande Ronde Valley and the great Cayuse Chief, Istachus, guided them across the Blue Mountains along Indian trails over the route which later came to be known as the Emigrant Road, and which was traveled each year by increasing numbers of Emigrants.

The Cayuse were a strong, independent and warlike tribe. It is fortunate indeed, that one of their great chiefs was a true and steadfast friend of the white man. Istachus was a loyal friend of Marcus Whitman and an advocate of peace and progress for the indians. However, there were other brave and capable Chiefs of the tribe, such as Five Crows and Young Chief, who did not have the foresight and wisdom of Istachus. These men could see no good in civilization as represented by the constant flow of emigration.

There can be little doubt that the chief cause of trouble between the Cayuse and whites, leading to the unfortunate Whitman Massacre and the war which followed, was that the emigrant route was directly through the heart of the Cayuse homeland. The Cayuse Tribe was therefor compelled to bear the brunt of the early contact with the white emigrants. The emigrants, usually in large well organized and armed parties, were unfortunately in many instances little interested in maintaining or fostering friendly relations with these Indians.

The Cayuse were skillful traders and first through the efforts of the Whitman Mission and trading horses for cattle; then later trading fresh oxen to the emigrants for oxen tired and thin from the effects of the long journey across the plains, usually getting two thin oxen for one fresh one, they soon acquired large herds of cattle. These cattle thrived on the rich bunchgrass of the hills and valleys; however, there were many angles of the cattle business in which they were unfamiliar, one of which was the white man's custom of branding.

It was a rather common practice of the emigrants as they descended into the land of the Cayuse, after completing the crossing of the Blue Mountains, to stop for a few days or weeks to recouperate their stock on the rich pasturage of the Umatilla or the Walla Walla River country.

Whether by design or accident their stock was frequently mixed with those belonging to the Indians, and when rounded up ownership was claimed on the basis of brands. Many of the cattle belonging to the Indians having been secured in trade from other emigrant trains also bore brands. Many of these were sometimes claimed by unscrupulous emigrants, who enforced their claims by a show of force. Also, some were not above employing the use of liquor to dull the senses of the Indians, in order to drive a hard bargain with them.

The Indians, on the other hand, sometimes made a practice of driving off stock belonging to the emigrants and returning them later for a reward; or even taking them beyond the reach of the emigrants entirely, never to be heard of again.

All these things caused friction and ill feeling, contributing very largely to the massacre of innocent people at Waiilatpu in 1847. The Cayuse War followed and hostilities were not ended until two years later. Governor Lane had promised the Tribe peace, when the murderers responsible for the Whitman Massacre were surrendered. After two years of indecision when the Cayuse realized that they could hope no longer to withstand the armies of the settlers, five Indians gave themselves up, assuming responsibility for the massacre and sacrificing themselves for the welfare of the Tribe. They were hanged in June of 1850, after a trial by jury at Oregon City. Peace was for the time being restored.

It was not until June 9, 1855 that a formal treaty was signed with the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, as one nation, although the Umatillas and Walla Wallas had not been involved in the Cayuse War.

During the treaty deliberations in the Walla Walla Valley at the great council a determined effort was made by the government representatives to place the Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla Tribes, either on the large Yakima Reservation or the still larger reservation set aside for the Nez Perce. However, the head Chiefs of these tribes refused to sign a treaty that removed them altogether from their home country. They held out for a seperate reservation along the western base of the Blue Moutnains. As finally agreed upon this was a small reservation which included most of the Umatilla River country above the present site of Pendleton, Oregon.

This reservation was squarely athwart the Emigrant Road as it came down the western slope of the Blue Mountains, which was an undesireable feature recognized as such by both the Indians and the government representatives. Chief Istachus refused to sign the treaty unless provisions were made to divert the emigrant travel around the

proposed reservation, thereby demostrating once more his foresight and good judgement. The other Chiefs, including the great Walla Walla Chief, Pio-Pio-Mox-Mox, supported Istachus in this stand.

The following provision was therefor inserted in Article #5 of the treaty:

"And provided also, that in consequence of the immigrant wagon road from Grand Round to Umatilla passing through the reservation herein specified, thus leading to turmoils and disputes between Indians and immigrants, and as it is known that a more desireable and practicable route may be had to the south of the present road, that a sum not exceeding ten thousand dollars shall be expended in locating and opening a wagon road from Powder River or Grand Round, so as to reach the plain at the western base of the Blue Mountains, south of the southern limits of said reservation."

Indian wars were waged during the next few years, beginning late in 1855 and lasting until the fall of 1858. These wars involved most of the tribes of the Inland Empire country excepting the Nez Perce and Umatillas, although the Walla Wallas, Yakimas, Klickitats, and Palouses were most deeply involved and bore the brunt of the fighting. These wars grew out of the influx of miners into the Inland Empire country following the discovery of gold near Fort Colville in 1855, and because terms of the treaties signed with the tribes could not be fulfilled. In fact the treaties made some provisions for immediate benefits to the Indians which no one seemed to have authority to carry out, and the Indians could not understand the necessity for the treaties to be ratified by the Senate and signed by the President. It was not until March 8, 1859 that the United States Senate ratified the treaty with the Walla Wallas, Cayuses and Umatilla Tribes, and the President Buchanan did not sign it until April 11, 1859, at which time it was made effective.

The first efforts on the part of the Indian Service, after the treaty became effective, were devoted to the establishment of Agencies on the Reservations, starting schools, etc., furnishing stipulated machinery, tools and goods, as required by treaty, and trying to get the Indians to settle down on their repective reservations. These things were naturally of greatest importance.

It was not until 1861 that we have any record of efforts being made to fulfil the clause in Article #5, of the Umatilla, Cayuse and Walla Walla Treaty in regard to the construction of a road around the reservation, which was quoted earlier in this article.

Photographic copies of documents recently secured from the "Records of the Office of Indian Affairs, Oregon Superintendency", through the National Archives, Washington, D.C., now in possession of G. J. Tucker contain valuable information about an almost forgotten road which has been the object of considerable speculation. That there was a road constructed across the Blue Mountains south of the southern limits of the Umatilla Reservation at a very early date had been established, but as to the details of the time it was built and by whom, seemed to be one of the forgotten or destroyed pages of history. Neither could any of the old pioneers be located who had any knowled of these things.

The first document, is a letter from William H. Rector, Superintendent for Indian Affairs for Oregon, to Henry G. Thornton of Portland, Oregon, dated August 10, 1861, parts of which are quoted as follows:

"Having accepted the appointment of Superintending Agent for the "locating and opening of a wagon road from Powder River or Grand Round to the plain at the Western Base of the Blue Mountains South of the Southern limits of the Reservation." "I herewith transmit to you instructions in regard to the duties assigned you. You will made immediate preparations for removing to the vicinity of the Grand Ronde or the Umatilla Valley. Owing to the difficulty incident to crossing the Cascade range of Mountains; you will avail yourself of the Steam Boat facilities from this place to The Dalles of the "Columbia". At that point you are directed to make purchase of such subsistance as will be necessary for yourself, and employees not exceeding twenty in number."——"Before you expend any work on the road you are instructed to confer with the Agent in Charge, Geo. H. Abbott, also Mrs. Daniel Steuart, and such other citizens of the Umatilla Valley in the vicinity of the proposed road, as have explored the Mountains, and are abundantly qualified to give you such information as will enable you to locate the road on the most practicable route. You will bear in mind that it is stipulated by treaty that the road shall belocated and opened south of the Southern limits of said Reservation. You will therefor cause no portion of the road to be located on the Reserve. By reference to the Treaty under which this road is to be opened (a copy of which will accompany these instruction) you will see the southern boundary of the Reservation clearly defined. You will, therfor, after a thorough examination of the route or routes as proposed by those to whom you have been referred, procede to locate the same by marks or blazes on each side of the road. You will commence opening the road from the western terminus. In selecting your employees I would recommend you to give preference to the citizens of the Umatilla Valley, who are personally interested in the work, and to immigrants who desire employment."

"To the latter class I would call your special attention, giving them employment in all cases, provided you have subsistance and tools sufficient, even though the number exceed that to which you have been restricted."

——"You will continue operations as long as the season will permit".

There is then a copy of a letter from Henry G. Thornton to William H. Rector, dated August 15, 1861 at Dalls City, Oregon, reporting on his trip, to that point, and stating that he would be going on with wagons and provisions from that point.

There is next a copy of a letter from William H. Rector to Honorable Wm. P. Dole, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Washington D.C., dated at Portland, Oregon, August 25, 1861. In this letter Recotr tells of employing Henry G. Thornton to take charge of the work of building this road, the following passage is quoted: "I have caused hime to enter into written contracs for the faithful performance of the

duties assigned him, and have agreed to allow him compensation therefor at the rate of $150. per month. He has been authorized to employ twenty men at wages ranging from $40 to $50 per month, and Subsistance furnished."

The next record is a letter from J. M. Kirkpatrick to W. H. Rector dated at Umatilla Agency, Oregon. December 4, 1861, in which Special Indian Agent Kirkpatrick makes the following statement; "I am also forwarding Receipts in Triplicate for Property belonging to the Grande Ronde Wagon Road, signed by W. H. Barnhart." This would indicate that the work on the road was pushed forward until about the first of December 1861.

The next document is a letter from Indian Agent William H. Barnhart dated August 5, 1862 at Umatilla Agency, to W. H. Rector, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Oregon. Quote, "I have respectfully to ask your advise in reference to completing the wagon road, commenced by you last season, to Grande Ronde or Powder River Valley, It is very important that the road should be completed this season, as at present the thoroughfare is directly through the Reservation. Over 4000 persons have passed by the Agency during the present summer, which influx of travel has been a source of great trouble to the Indians, & a vexation to me. ——With your approbation I shall let the contract at once, so that work may be commenced immediately."

There is now a break in the official records until the year of 1864. Correspondence then is in an effort to secure payment and settle the claim of the contractor who finished the road, a Mr. B. F. Rector.

The next document on record is a letter dated May 28 at Salem, Oregon from Mr. J. W. Perit Huntington, Superintendent for Indian Affairs of Oregon, addressed to Mr. C. S. Woodworth Chief Clerk in the Superintendent's office, directing him to made a trip over the road constructed by Mr. B. F. Rector and make an estimate on the ground as to the proper amount of payment that should be made to settle this account, etc.

The next record is the reply by Mr. C. S. Woodworth in the form of a report of his examination of the road and his recommendations. I include the entire letter:

Salem, Oregon
June 15, 1864

Sir:

Your letter of May 28th 1864 directing me to proceed to the locality of the wagon road leading from Grande Ronde River to the Powder River Valley, located and opened by B. F. Rector under contract

with W. H. Barnhart, U.S. Indian Agent dated August 34d 1862, to examine and report to your office at an early day, the expense of constructing said road was received same date.

In compliance with your instructions I have the honor to Submit the following report.

I left Salem May 29th and arrived at the termination of Wagon Road opened by the late Supt. W. H. Rector, and place of beginning of Wagon Road constructed by B. F. Rector, June 5th 1864. thence down the valley of the Grande Ronde River 12 miles, intersecting the old Emigrant road. thence along and near Said Emigrant road 9 miles to northern edge of Grande Ronde Valley. thence along said road through the Valley 8 miles to the foot of the mountain dividing the waters of Grande Ronde and Powder Rivers, thence to the Summit of Said Mountain 4 miles, thence to Powder River Valley about 6 miles, making the entire distance 39 miles. Which for the convenience of Estimating I have made five divisions, as follows.

Division No. 1. 12 Miles

The road is constructed along and down the valley of the Grande Ronde River Crossing the river Seventeen times requiring but little labor in opening clearing and grading river banks. I have estimated the average cost per mile at $20.00.

Division No. 2. 9 Miles

This division which is located on and near the Old Emigrant Road, is very mountainous and rocky, requiring much grading along the mountain sides, quarying and mining heavy rocks, &. there being evidence of much work done I have Estimated the average cost per mile at $100.00.

Division No. 3. 8 Miles

Continues on the line of the Old Emigrant Road through Grande Ronde Valley, but little evidence remaining of any work having been done. I have estimated the average cost per Mile at $5.00.

Division No. 4. 4 Miles

There is evidence of more work done upon this division than in the same distance upon any other, the mountain is steep and rocky. Much quarrying and mining of large rocks was done by Mr. Rector in the construction of this portion of the Wagon Road. I have averaged the cost of this division per mile at $150.00.

Division No. 5. 6 Miles

The descent from the Summit of the Mountain to Powder River Valley is gradual, and easy grade for a Wagon Road. No evidence of any heavy work having been done by Mr. Rector, light grading, and removing detached rocks and stone from the road is the principal amount. I have estimated the average cost per mile at $50.00.

The expense of exploring the several routes presented before locating I have estimated at the round sum of $200.00, which I consider ample for the service rendered.

Recapitulation

Division No	1,	12	miles.	Cost	per	mile	$20.00	$240.00
"	2	9	"	"	"	"	100.00	900.00
"	3	8	"	"	"	"	5.00	40.00
"	4	4	"	"	"	"	150.00	600.00
"	5	6	"	"	"	"	50.00	300.00
For Exploring and Locating Wagon Road								200.00
							Total	$2,280.00

As Gold is the only currency in use in the country where the road lies, and labor there must be paid for in coin, I have made the estimate above at coin rate. If the estimate is desired in Legal Tender notes the amount should by proportionably increased.

I found after passing over this road, that it would be impossible to make a very accurate Estimate of the expense necessarily incurred in constructing said road by Mr. Rector some two years ago. The large amount of travel to and from the different Mining districts, have been over a great portion of this road, nearly obliterating all evidence of work done.

Hoping the above will be acceptable

I remain

Very Tespectfully

Your Obt Svrt

C. S. Woodworth

Chief Clerk to Supt.

Hon. J. W. Perit Huntington

Supt Indn Affrs in Ore.

Salem, Oregon

There are two more letters. One from Huntington to Rector offering settlement in the amount of four thousand one hundred and forty five dollars, and a reply by Rector accepting the offer and releasing the government from all further liabilities under his contract.

There can be no doubt now in view of the above records, either as to the route over which the road was constructed, or as to the time of construction.

The road built by Henry G Thornton under the general direction of the Superintendent for Indian Affairs for Oregon, Wm. H Rector, was up East Birch Creek from where Pilot Rock is now located to the headwaters of said creek; thence along the summit of the Blue Mountains where they divide the waters of McCoy Creek and Johnson Creek (called Howtome Creek in the Reservation description as written in the Treaty of 1855); thence from a point near the headwaters of Johnson Creek the road leaves the summit of the Blue Mountains to follow a ridge southward and southeastward toward Starkey Prairie, said ridge being the one which divides the waters of McCoy Creek and McIntire Creek; thence down McCoy Creek to Meadow Creek; thence over a low hill to the Grande Ronde River at the head of the canyon between Starkey and Hilgard. This section of the road was built in 1861.

The road built in 1862 by B. F. Rector under contract is so well described in the report of C. S. Woodworth, quoted in this article, that no further explanation appears necessary.

However, it will be surprising to many students of history that a considerable amount of money was expended by a government agency as early as 1862 in the improvement of the Old Emigrant Road from the vicinity of Hilgard, or the mouth of Five Points Creek, across the hills to LaGrande, then along the edge of the Grande Ronde Velley to the mouth of Ladd Canyon, thence up Ladd Canyon and over the hills to Clover Creek and into Powder River Valley.

See attached map.

Gerald J. Tucker

Vol. 30, Bancroft's Works, page 486.

1862. "The pioneers of the Grand Rond suffered none of these hardships from severe weather experienced in the John Day region of at Walla Walla. Only 18 inches of snow fell in January, which disappeared in a few days, leaving the meadows green for their cattle to graze on. LaGrande had another advantage, it was on the emigrant road, which gave it communication with the Columbia. Another road was being opened eastward 50 miles to the Snake River, on a direct course to the Salmon River mines; and a road was also opened in the previous November from the western foot of the Blue Mountains to the Grand Rond Valley, which was to be extended to the Powder River Valley."

"Footnote"

"The last road mentioned was one stipulated for in the treaty of 1855 with the Cayuse and Umatilla Indians, which should be located and opened from Powder River or Grand Rond to the western base of the Blue Mountains, south of the southern limits of the reservation. The explorations were made under the direction of H.G. Thornton, by order of Wm, H. Rector. The distance by this road from the base to the summit is sixteen miles; from the summit to Grande Rond River, eighteen miles, and down the river to the old emigrant road, twelve miles."

"Ref. "Indian Affairs Report for 1861, page 154."

"Portland Oregonian Feb. 6, 1862."

Umatilla County Commissioners Journal, Vol. A.

Page 92, "To Benjamin Smith on the right fork of Birch Creek, thence up East Birch Creek to intersect the Dayley Road at or near Noyer's house".

Made County road to County Bndy., from Umatilla City on January 3, 1866.

District #4 of the "County road from Umatilla City, via Lurchins Bridge to the County Line of Umatilla Co."

Page 211. "From the terminus of the forks of Birch Creek to the county line of Umatilla County on said road near the Noyer house in the Blue Mountains."

"District #4 to inclue all persons living on both forks of Birch Creek as well as persons living on Steward Cr."